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ABSTRACT

The second phase of a three-phase study undertaken in Iowa provided a detailed analysis of the adult basic education/English-as-a-Second-Language (ABE/ESL) population. Objectives were to determine student motivation, segment the ESL population into groups based on group behavior, segment the population into groups based on ethnicity, and describe ethnic groups according to sociodemographic and motivational variables. Data were collected through interviews with 240 ESL students in 4 large urban programs. Findings indicated considerable similarity between motivations of ABE and ESL students. They were motivated by the need for self-improvement, a desire to help children, employment and economic concerns, and a desire to read and write. Different motivations for ESL students were self-improvement through social integration and better functioning/reduced isolation. Motivational segmentation identified six groups: family women, strivers, integrating Southeast Asians, the least family oriented, and better-educated temporary residents. A cultural segmentation identified five ethnic groupings: Latin Americans, Middle Easterners, Southeastern Asians, Far Easterners, and Europeans. Significant differences were identified between groups in respect to motivations and sociodemographic variables. (The instrument is appended.) (YLB)

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# IOWA'S ESL STUDENTS
# A DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE

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Finally, we wish to say thank you to the ESL students across the state of Iowa who answered all the questions asked of them, in a different language and culture, hoping to help us improve the ESL program for others. It is our earnest desire that this study will do just that.

# IOWA'S ESL STUDENTS:
# A DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE

## Introduction

In recent years new waves of immigration have resulted in a dramatic increase in the demand for ESL (English as a Second Language). Yet despite the fact that ESL programs are flourishing in Iowa and throughout the country, our knowledge of the ESL population is at best scant. Obviously the ESL population is as diverse as the nonEnglish speaking population of the world. Although individual teachers recognize this diversity, too often those who develop curriculum, administer programs, and plan recruitment proceed as if the ESL population were one homogeneous group. This precludes the differentiated approach to marketing and instructional planning which has proved to be so successful in other realms of adult education.

However, if ESL programs are to tailor their promotion and instructional efforts to specific subgroups, they must know what the relevant groups are, and they must be able to predict with reasonable accuracy what each group's reaction will be to the program's offerings. It is the purpose of the research reported here to provide this much-needed information.

This report presents the findings of the second phase of a three-phase study undertaken in Iowa to provide a highly detailed analysis of the ABE/ESL target population. The first phase focused on the ABE population

and culminated in two reports* which will collectively refer to here as "the ABE studies." The third, yet-to-be conducted phase will focus on those members of the target population who have never participated in literacy education.

The objectives and methods of the present ESL study closely paralleled the ABE studies in order to enable rough comparisons between the students in the two programs. The objectives of this study are:

1. To determine what motivates students to attend ESL programs.
2. To segment the ESL population into groups based on the way each group is expected to behave in respect to ESL.
3. To segment the population into groups based on ethnicity and to describe each ethnic group according to sociodemographic and motivational variables.

This report is divided into five sections: Methods and Procedures, Motivations, Population Segmentation, Ethnic Analysis, and Conclusions and Implications.

*Iowa's Adult Basic Education Students: Descriptive Profiles Based on Motivations, Cognitive Ability, and Sociodemographic Variables by Hal Beder and Thomas Valentine

An Analysis of the Iowa Adult Basic Education Program: A Final Report by Hal Beder and Thomas Valentine

Copies of these reports can be ordered from John Hartwig, Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA, 50319.

## I. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

### Population and Sampling

The population for this study was defined as all ESL students in the state of Iowa enrolled during the spring of 1987. Because logistics precluded use of a true random sample, a sample large enough for data analysis (N=240) was selected from four large urban programs in four separate regions of the state (sixty selected from each program). These programs were selected based on the suggestions of ESL practitioners in Iowa, who felt that, taken together, these programs adequately represented the broader ESL population in Iowa. The programs selected were:

| Merged Area | Program | ESL Student Population |
|---|---|---|
| IX | Eastern Iowa Community College District | 177 |
| X | Kirkwood Community College | 125 |
| XI | Des Moines Area Community College | 283 |
| XII | Western Iowa Tech Community College | 101 |

Although lack of randomness reduces somewhat our confidence in generalizability, this limitation is mitigated by the fact that ESL in Iowa tends to be concentrated in the large population centers similar to those selected for this study. Hence, if there is a bias, it is against small, rural programs, which have been reported to account for very few of the ESL students served.

Clearly, low English-speaking ability and cross-cultural differences in ascribing meanings to words are problems which must be faced in any survey research study employing an ESL population as respondents. To deal with these problems, the teachers in the data collection sites were directed to identify all students who, in their judgements, would be unable to participate accurately in an English language interview; those

identified were not included in the sample. Furthermore, each interviewer was asked to provide his or her assessment of the accuracy of the interview. Of the total number of responses sought for the study (N=240), 222 were collected after refusals and persons who had participated in the pilot study were deleted. Of this working sample (N=222), eighteen (8 percent) were rated of dubious accuracy and were thus deleted from analysis. This resulted in a final N of 206.

## Survey Development

The survey instrument for the study, administered in interview format, was designed to collect two frames of data. Paralleling the ABE studies, the first frame dealt with motivations for attending (40 items) and the second frame dealt with sociodemographic variables predictive of group behavior (33 items). The survey is included as Appendix A.

In our opinion, one of the major flaws with much research probing the goals or motivations of ABE and ESL students is that the variables selected for treatment are either not grounded in the reality of adult education or they fail to get below the surface of fairly obvious instructional outcomes (e.g., learning to read). We sought to avoid these flaws, particularly in generating items for the motivation frame.

Items for the motivation frame were derived in two ways: First, items which had proved potent in the ABE studies were reformatted for use in the ESL study. Originally, all these items had been generated through face-to-face interviews with ABE students. Second, Iowa ESL teachers were asked to supply us with lists of factors which they felt motivated their students to to attend, and these "motivators" were also formatted into items. As a result of these procedures, forty items resulted.

Items for the sociodemographic frame were generated in conferring with consultants, from Iowa ESL teachers, and through reformatting socio-demographic items which had proved to be sensitive indicators in the ABE studies.

Student input is essential in any study of the type undertaken here. This is especially true for ESL students who may ascribe different meanings to the words on a survey. Further, given the fact that respondents' English language proficiency was generally low, we were concerned whether the survey would collect reliable information. To control for these concerns, the survey was piloted with 16 ESL students from the four programs in the state. As a result of the pilot study, several items were added and several were modified.

## Data Collection and Analysis

All data were collected through interviews conducted by interviewers who were thoroughly familiar with ESL and were trained by the project. On the average, an interview took one half hour to complete.

Completed surveys were forwarded to the principal investigators who had them coded and entered into the computer. The Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used for data analysis. Specific data analysis procedures will be discussed in subsequent sections as appropriate.

## II. MOTIVATIONS

It is important to understand why students attend ESL programs. Adult students attend programs to actualize very personal and specific motivations. If we understand their motivations, we will be in a much stronger position to tailor both promotional messages and instruction, thereby allowing us to design more effective recruitment strategies and more relevant instruction.

As noted in the preceding chapter, all items probing motivations were drawn from teachers and adult students themselves. Hence motivation, as defined and measured in this study, is grounded in the reality of ESL. In analyzing motivations, we wanted to be as inclusive as possible and, accordingly, the survey included forty items on motivation. Yet the simple analysis of forty discrete items would result in research findings which, though accurate, would be too complex to inform ESL practice. To avoid this problem, motivations were subjected to factor analysis, a procedure which groups items together according to their basic similarity to each other. Once groups (factors) have been identified through factor analysis, the researcher then examines each one to discover what the items within it have in common. The concept which items have in common then "defines" the factor. Use of this powerful procedure enabled us to make the complex understandable, and in essence, to ascertain the underlying structure of motivations to participate in ESL.

Through factor analysis we identified seven factors of motivations for participating in ESL programs.

TABLE 1
Factors of Motivations of Iowa ESL Students

| Number | Item | Loading | Item mean |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **FACTOR 1 SELF-IMPROVEMENT THROUGH SOCIAL INTEGRATION** (mean item mean 2.5) | | |
| 12 | to feel more important | .70 | 2.5 |
| 24 | to be smarter | .69 | 2.4 |
| 16 | to be a better person | .68 | 2.4 |
| 23 | so I can make decisions about my own life | .60 | 2.7 |
| 39 | so people won't cheat me | .57 | 2.5 |
| 36 | to keep my family together | .52 | 2.1 |
| 19 | so people won't make fun of me | .48 | 2.3 |
| 37 | to understand how to live in the U.S. | .44* | 2.7 |
| 21 | to become a U.S. citizen | .44 | 2.4 |
| | **FACTOR 2 HELPING CHILDREN** (mean item mean = 2.1) | | |
| 42 | to help my children with schoolwork | .87 | 2.3 |
| 25 | to talk to my children's teachers | .85 | 2.2 |
| 33 | to be a better example for my children | .84 | 2.3 |
| 8 | to speak English to my children | .76 | 2.1 |
| 40 | to please my husband/wife | .43* | 2.0 |
| | **FACTOR 3 JOB/ECONOMICS** (mean item mean = 2.3) | | |
| 10 | to get a better job | .83 | 2.5 |
| 9 | to enter job training | .77 | 2.4 |
| 1 | to get a job | .74 | 2.3 |
| 35 | to earn more money | .59 | 2.4 |
| 28 | to support myself | .50 | 2.6 |
| 30 | to please my employer | .49 | 2.0 |
| 34 | to get a U.S. high school diploma | .44 | 1.9 |
| | **FACTOR 4 FUNCTION BETTER/REDUCE ISOLATION** (mean item mean = 2.75) | | |
| 26 | to use the telephone better | .70 | 2.8 |
| 13 | to shop better | .67 | 2.5 |
| 5 | to read directions | .61 | 2.8 |
| 15 | to meet new people | .60 | 2.6 |
| 29 | so I won't feel lonely | .45 | 2.3 |
| 37 | to understand how to live in the U.S. | .42* | 2.7 |

*loads on more than one factor

TABLE 1 (continued)

| Number | Item | Loading | Item mean |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **FACTOR 5 BECOME EMPOWERED** (mean item mean = 2.6) | | |
| 6 | to feel more sure of myself | .83 | 2.7 |
| 20 | to make better use of free time | .68 | 2.5 |
| 11 | to show myself I can | .68 | 2.6 |
| 3 | to fit better in my neighborhood | .58 | 2.5 |
| | **FACTOR 6 GAIN READING AND WRITING SKILLS** (mean item mean = 2.8) | | |
| 17 | to read English better | .75 | 2.9 |
| 31 | because I enjoy learning new things | .65 | 2.8 |
| 38 | to write better in English | .60 | 2.9 |
| 18 | to help other people | .51 | 2.6 |
| 32 | to be more independent | .47 | 2.8 |
| | **FACTOR 7 CONTRIBUTE TO NATIVE LAND** (mean item mean = 2.0) | | |
| 41 | to help people in my native land | .75 | 2.3 |
| 22 | for when I return to my native land | .67 | 1.9 |
| 40 | to please my husband/wife | .42* | 2.0 |

*Loads on more than one factor

NOTE: Factor solution after varimax rotation. Seven factors selected on the basis of scree test and factor interpretability. Factor loading criterion = .40. Means are based on a three-point scale with one being low and three being high.

Factor 1: Self-Improvement Through Social Integration

In the ABE studies' analysis of motivation, we found that the first factor was comprised of items measuring self-improvement, and accordingly, we labeled that factor "self-improvement." We felt that this was a very significant finding, as self-improvement was primarily an intrinsic

motivation while most of the literature on ABE assumed that motivation was primarily extrinsic (e.g., to gain employment). In the present study we find somewhat the same thing but with a slightly different twist.

The first three items of Factor 1, ("to feel more important," "to be smarter," and "to be a better person"), are all related to the self-improvement dimension. The rest of the items, however, seem to place self-improvement within the context of becoming integrated into American society. It would seem from this factor that self-improvement is an important motivator for ESL students, just as it is for ABE students, but for ESL students there is the added dimension that self-improvement occurs within the context of desired social integration. Based on these data, we have defined Factor 1 as "Self-Improvement Through Social Integration."

Factor 2: Helping Children

The items of the second factor pertain to a desire to help one's children. This factor portrays the context of foreign-born adults who do not speak English well and thus have difficulty helping their children to grow up in the mainstream, English-speaking world. Two of the five items ("to talk to my children's teachers," "to speak English to my children") suggest that the inability to communicate in English is a deterrent to at least some aspects of parenting, which students desire to overcome by learning to speak English. "Helping Children," as we have labeled this factor, has a close parallel in the "Family Responsibilities" factor of the ABE studies.

Factor 3: Job/Economics

The items of Factor 3 deal with gaining employment (or better employment) and thereby acquiring more income. Interestingly, the item "to get a U.S. high school diploma" falls within this realm for the ESL population. It is also worth mentioning that in the ABE studies, economic need and job advancement split out into two distinct factors, while for the ESL population they are apparently considered to be parts of the same dimension.

Factor 4: Function Better/Reduce Isolation

Factor 4 includes items which are indicative of what is often termed functional literacy: "to use the phone better," "to shop better," "to read directions," and "to understand how to live in the United States." Yet it also includes the item, "so I won't feel lonely," which suggests that functioning better, in a coping skills sense, is perhaps viewed as a means toward reducing isolation. We have termed this factor "Function Better/Reduce Isolation."

Factor 5: Become Empowered

Factor 5 includes four items: "to feel more sure of myself," "to make better use of free time," "to show myself I can," and "to fit better in my neighborhood." The items "to feel more sure of myself" and "to show myself I can" are clearly indicative of a motivation to become more empowered--empowered, perhaps, to act ("make better use of my spare time") and to have an impact on one's surroundings ("fit into my community").

Factor 6: Gain Reading and Writing Skills

Factor 6 is the most perplexing of the seven factors. According to its mean item mean (2.8), it is the most important factor. In fact, four of the five items in this factor have item means which are at or above 2.8 on a scale where 3.0 is the highest possible score. Yet at the same time it is difficult to interpret. "To read English better" and "to write better in English" obviously relate to a motivation to acquire literacy skills. The remaining items ("because I enjoy learning new things," "to help other people," and "to be more independent") all have in common one thing: they are all intrinsic motivations and as such may serve to refine the context of a desire to read and write better. We have labeled this factor "Gain Reading/Writing Skills."

Factor 7: Contribute to Native Country

Factor 7 contains three items: "to help people in my native land," "for when I return to my native land," and "to please my husband or wife." The highest loading items on this factor lead us to label it "Contribution to Native Land."

An issue remains in respect to motivations: What specific motivations, as measured by individual items on motivation, are the strongest? For methodological reasons, that simple question is by no means easy to answer definitively. The item means of specific motivations are one good indication, however. The item means for the nine highest motivation items are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Nine Motivations Rated Highest by Item Mean

| Item | Item Mean |
|---|---|
| To read better in English | 2.9 |
| To write better in English | 2.9 |
| To be more independent | 2.8 |
| Because I enjoy learning new things | 2.8 |
| To use the telephone better | 2.8 |
| To read directions | 2.8 |
| So I can make decisions about my own life | 2.7 |
| To understand how to live in the United States | 2.7 |
| To feel more sure about myself | 2.7 |

## Discussion of Motivations

The motivations of adults to participate in ESL instruction are strongly reflective of a non-nativeborn population that desires to be successful in the United States. As with our ABE studies, self-improvement was the major component of the first motivational factor. Yet the ESL group differed from the ABE group in that, for them, self-improvement was associated with social integration into United States society.

The theme of becoming successful in a country where few of our respondents were born, but in which the great majority intend to stay (79 percent), is woven throughout most of the motivations. ESL students desire to help their children who are growing up in an English-speaking world from which they themselves are largely cut off. They wish to improve their employment situations and to increase their incomes in order to move up the socioeconomic ladder. They also want to function better in a society where failure to function leads to isolation, and they want to empower themselves.

In short, ESL students perceive themselves as being partly outside and partly within American society. The key to being more within and reaping the benefits of American society is learning English and that, quite clearly, is why they participate in ESL.

## III POPULATION SEGMENTATION

Although factor analysis was useful in reducing the complexity of forty discrete motivations to seven factors, and although it helped us to identify the underlying structure of motivation to participate in ESL, it in itself did not help us to recognize the diversity among ESL students. In order for this study to be of best use in program planning, we needed to use a procedure which would identify and describe distinct groups of students according to the way they are expected to behave in respect to ESL. To accomplish this, we analyzed the data using a disjoint cluster analysis procedure (SAS FASTCLUS). This powerful procedure groups respondents (as opposed to factor analysis, which groups variables) into mutually exclusive clusters for which the members of each cluster are similar to one another and dissimilar to the members of any other cluster.

The steps we followed in this analysis are as follows:

1. The items loading .40 or better in each factor were formed into a summative index (the item scores were added together and divided by the number of items). Then the factors were subjected to cluster analysis, a procedure which will generate as many clusters as it is directed to. After examining all cluster solutions between two and ten, we decided upon a six-cluster solution based upon parsimony and interpretability as well as the examination of plots of r-square values and SAS's cubic clustering criterion. One cluster, Cluster Four, consisted of only three individuals, however. Although the data regarding this cluster will be presented, no generalizations will be made about this cluster due to its small number of members.

2. Each of the six factors was then described in terms of the sociodemographic variables.

Table 3 presents the results of the population segmentation. Before we discuss these results, however, it is important to explain this rather

complex table. At the top of the table are the number of subjects in each cluster. Down the left hand side, directly under the word "Factors," are the factors as defined in the previous section. Each cluster has a score on each factor which can hypothetically range from 1 (low) to 3 (high).

The groups (clusters) of ESL students identified in this study are motivated by multiple motivations. To understand the motivational configuration for each cluster, within each cluster compare the scores on each factor to the mean for the population and to the scores for other clusters. To define a cluster in terms of its sociodemographic characteristics, the mean scores of sociodemographic items are compared to each other and to the population mean. The results are presented in Table 3. Because of space limitations, sociodemographic items have been abbreviated. For a more exact rendition of each item consult Appendix A.

Table 3
Population Segmentation of the ESL Sample by Motivational Factors:
Summary Results of Cluster Analysis

| Variable | Total Sample | Clusters | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| N | 204 | 26 | 74 | 26 | 3 | 45 | 30 |
| % of Sample | 100 | 13 | 36 | 13 | 1 | 22 | 15 |
| Motivational Factor Scores (Mean item means) | | | | | | | |
| F1: Self-Improvement Through Social Integration | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 1.3 | 2.6 | 2.0 |
| F2: Helping Children | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 1.7 | 1.1 | 1.8 | 1.4 |
| F3: Job/Economics | 2.3 | 1.9 | 2.7 | 2.3 | 1.7 | 2.5 | 1.6 |
| F4: Function Better/ Reduce Isolation | 2.7 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 1.3 | 2.8 | 2.4 |
| F5: Become Empowered | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 2.8 | 2.4 |
| F6: Gain Reading and Writing Skills | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 1.9 | 2.9 | 2.7 |
| F7: Contribute to Native Land | 2.0 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 1.9 |

Table 3 (continued)

| Variable | Total Sample | Clusters | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Personal Variables | | | | | | | |
| Mean age | 33.1 | 31.3 | 34.1 | 34.6 | 38.3 | 32.5 | 31.6 |
| % Female | 56 | 73 | 57 | 46 | 100 | 44 | 63 |
| Mean year entered USA | '83 | '83 | '82 | '83 | '79 | '82 | '85 |
| % Married, living with spouse | 64 | 88 | 74 | 46 | 100 | 51 | 50 |
| % Married, not living with spouse | 3 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 3 |
| % Single | 33 | 12 | 22 | 50 | 0 | 44 | 47 |
| % Having children | 60 | 65 | 74 | 50 | 67 | 53 | 37 |
| Mean number children | 3.1 | 2.4 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 2.2 | 3.3 |
| Mean number children living at home | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 3.0 | 1.8 | 2.2 |
| Mean number children in American schools | 1.8 | 1.8 | 2.1 | 1.7 | 3.0 | 1.3 | 1.4 |
| Mean number children who speak English | 2.4 | 1.8 | 2.9 | 2.0 | 3.5 | 1.8 | 2.6 |
| Mean number people living (with respondent) in home | 3.8 | 3.0 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 3.3 | 3.7 | 3.1 |
| Mean number of these people who speak English | 3.2 | 2.3 | 3.7 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 2.7 |
| Economic Variables | | | | | | | |
| Mean annual household income (in thousands of dollars) | 19.1 | 19.2 | 21.0 | 14.7 | 8.0 | 19.3 | 16.8 |
| % Employed | 53 | 42 | 62 | 58 | 0 | 53 | 40 |
| % Receiving public assistance | 30 | 31 | 44 | 31 | 33 | 17 | 13 |

Table 3 (continued)

| Variable | Total Sample | Clusters | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Education-Related Variables | | | | | | | |
| Mean years of schooling in native country | 9.8 | 10.8 | 8.1 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 9.8 | 13.0 |
| Mean year of enrollment in this program | '85 | '86 | '84 | '86 | '86 | '85 | '86 |
| How well do you read and write in your native language? (1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Very Well) | | | | | | | |
| Mean score | 2.7 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.8 |
| How old were you when you started to learn English | 23.2 | 20.0 | 23.8 | 23.4 | 26.0 | 23.1 | 24.2 |
| Geographic Region of Origin | | | | | | | |
| % Latin America | 26 | 42 | 20 | 8 | 0 | 33 | 33 |
| % Middle East | 5 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 13 |
| % Southeast Asia | 47 | 15 | 68 | 80 | 66 | 37 | 13 |
| % Far East | 18 | 31 | 9 | 8 | 33 | 23 | 23 |
| % Europe | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| Cluster Compositions by Geographic Region of Origin (Read across) | | | | | | | |
| % Latin America | | 22 | 27 | 4 | 0 | 27 | 20 |
| % Middle East | | 20 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 40 |
| % Southeast Asia | | 5 | 51 | 21 | 2 | 17 | 4 |
| % Far East | | 23 | 20 | 6 | 3 | 28 | 20 |
| % Europe | | 13 | 13 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 63 |
| Type of Residence in Native Country | | | | | | | |
| % lived on farm | 15 | 19 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 3 |
| % lived in city | 71 | 81 | 60 | 76 | 100 | 64 | 93 |
| % lived "other" | 13 | 0 | 15 | 23 | 0 | 21 | 3 |
| Plan to Return to Native Country to Visit? | | | | | | | |
| % yes | 51 | 65 | 39 | 31 | 100 | 56 | 70 |
| % maybe | 33 | 23 | 45 | 31 | 0 | 36 | 7 |
| % no | 16 | 11 | 16 | 38 | 0 | 9 | 3 |

(Table 3 continued)

| Variable | Total Sample | Clusters | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Plan to Return to Native Country to Stay? | | | | | | | |
| % yes | 19 | 31 | 8 | 4 | 33 | 16 | 53 |
| % maybe | 33 | 27 | 44 | 48 | 0 | 22 | 20 |
| % no | 48 | 42 | 48 | 48 | 67 | 62 | 27 |
| How Often Do You Communicate With Friends or Relatives in Your Native Country? (1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often) | | | | | | | |
| Mean score | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.4 |
| How Often Do You Speak English When You Are . . ? (Mean scores: 1 = Often, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Never) | | | | | | | |
| . . . at home | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.2 |
| . . . out with friends | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 1.9 |
| . . . at work | 1.4 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 3.0 | 1.4 | 1.7 |
| Program Evaluation Items (Mean scores: 1 = Not True, 2 = Somewhat True, 3 = Very True) | | | | | | | |
| I like my teachers in these classes | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| I like the other students in these classes | 2.8 | 2.7 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 1.7 | 2.8 | 3.0 |
| I am learning what I want to learn in these classes | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 2.0 | 2.9 | 2.8 |
| Interviewer Ratings of Language Skills | | | | | | | |
| % low | 8 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 13 |
| % moderate | 54 | 50 | 60 | 73 | 33 | 47 | 37 |
| % high | 39 | 46 | 36 | 27 | 67 | 38 | 50 |

## Discussion of Population Segments

### Cluster One: Family Women

There are 26 students in Cluster One which represents 13% of the ESL population. These students are more motivated towards Helping Children than any other group except Cluster Two. They are also considerably motivated by Empowerment and Learning to Read and Write Better in English. They are not particularly concerned with jobs and increased incomes.

In their native countries, the great majority (.81) lived in cities. A disproportionately large proportion of Cluster One members (.65) expect to return to their native countries and nearly a third plan to stay there. More students in Cluster One are married and living with their spouse than students in any other group, and there are fewer single students than in any other group. Cluster One is slightly below average in respect to employment (.42) and slightly above in the percent who have children (.65). It includes the greatest number of females and is above the average in respect to the percent who are rated of high English proficiency by their interviewers.

Although there are in total more Latin Americans scattered throughout the other groups, Latin Americans comprise 42 percent of Cluster One, which is the highest percentage of Latin Americans in any group and the highest concentration of any one ethnic group in this cluster. Cluster One students communicate more often with friends and relatives in their native countries than any other group, and they are tied with Cluster Six for the highest percent who read well in their native language. They have disproportionately fewer children and have the lowest number of people living with them in their homes. They are the youngest group (mean age 33), which may explain why they have fewer children, and they started to

speak English at the earliest age (mean 20.0). They are about average in respect to the frequency with which they speak English at home and with friends, but a disproportionately larger percent do not speak English as frequently at work. Their incomes are about average.

Because of a motivational orientation towards helping children, a high marriage rate, and a larger female composition, we have termed this group "Family Women." It is worthy to note that this group roughly compares with the group, "Mainstream Women," which we have previously identified among the ABE population.

Cluster Two: The Strivers

Cluster Two comprises 36% (N=74) of the population and is the largest group. The most striking characteristic of this group's motivational orientation is that it seems to be highly motivated by all factors. In fact, it has the highest (or equal to the highest) score on each and every factor.

Although the majority of this group originally lived in the city (.60), fewer lived in the city than any other group, and more (.25) lived in the country. Less than the average plan to return to their native countries and considerably less than average plan to stay if they do return. A disproportionate number of Cluster Two's members are married. This group is the most employed (.62) and more have children than any other group (.74). Cluster Two is about average with respect to female composition and has the highest incidence of members receiving public assistance (.44). Over half the Southeast Asians in the sample belong to this group, and the group is comprised of .68 Southeast Asians and .20 Latin Americans.

As a group, Cluster Two has been in the ESL program the longest. They rate the program the highest of any group, and they have had the least number of years schooling in their native countries. Cluster Two contains the lowest percentage of students who read well in their native languages. In addition, this group has the largest number of children and the largest number of people living in their homes, and not surprisingly, the largest number of people speaking English in their households. They have the highest incomes.

The characteristics which seem to mark this group are their high motivation scores on every factor, a disproportionate percent of Southeast Asians, a lower literacy level in their native languages, larger numbers of children, the highest incidence of employment and the highest incomes. Accordingly we will term this cluster "the Strivers."

Cluster Three: Integrating Southeast Asians

Cluster Three comprises 13% of the population (N = 26). This group is motivated primarily by "Functioning Better/Reducing Isolation" and to some extent by "Job/Economics" and "Reading and Writing." Motivation scores on "Job/Economics" and "Reading and Writing" are about average for the population.

No individuals in this group report living on a farm. Seventy-six percent lived in cities while 23% report an unexplained "other" as their residence. The smallest proportion of all groups plan to return to their native countries (.31) and only 4% would return to stay. This group has the least incidence of marriage (.46) and the highest percent of single persons (.50). More than the sample average are employed. Given the lower

marriage rate, it is not surprising that fewer than average in this group have children. The majority (.54) of this group are male, and as reported by interviewers, the English language ability of this group is the lowest. Perhaps the most significant demographic characteristic is that .80 of Cluster Three are Southeast Asians. Those who have children have more than the average number, but the difference between the number of children and the number of children living with the respondent is the greatest of all groups. This group is the oldest group and has the lowest incomes.

With this group we have the picture of a largely Southeast Asian population who are here to stay, if not by choice then by design. They are most motivated by a desire to function better, job economics, and reading and writing. We shall term them Integrating Southeast Asians.

Cluster Four: (Uninterpretable)

Cluster Four is very small, representing but one percent of the population. For this reason we have eliminated it from analysis and comparisons with other clusters. However, even small clusters represent real groups; hence we have presented the data on Cluster Four primarily for the reader's interest. It is possible that Cluster Four represents a viable segment of the ESL service population that was undersampled in the study.

Cluster Five: Least Family Oriented

With an N of 45, Cluster Five represents 22% of the population. These students have slightly above average motivations on all factors except Helping Children and Contributing to Their Native Lands. Slightly more than average plan to return to their native countries, but primarily for a

visit or visits rather than to stay. About half of this group are married (.51) and 44% are single. About half, the average for the population, are employed and fewer than average have children. Cluster Five has the highest percentage of males and a less than average proportion are on welfare (.17). This group is truly of mixed ethnic composition and well within the average range on nearly all other descriptive variables except the time they have been in the United States and their number of children. They, as a group, have been here the longest and have the fewest number of children. Although this group is perhaps the most difficult to define, we have termed it the Least Family Oriented.

Cluster Six: Better-Educated Temporary Residents

Cluster Six has thirty individuals, 15% of the population. Although this group is most motivated by Functioning Better, Empowerment, and Reading/Writing, it has less than average scores on all these factors. Nearly all this group come from urban environments (.93). The greatest number of all groups plan to return to their native countries (.70) and to stay once returned (.53). About half are married and half are single. They are the least employed and fewer than any other group have children. Sixty-three percent are women and there is a low incidence of welfare (.13). Cluster Six is rated the most highly by interviewers on English proficiency. Although in respect to ethnicity the composition of this cluster is mixed, it is worthy to note that nearly two-thirds of the Europeans belong to it.

This group has had more education in their native countries than any other (mean = 13.0 years). While having a slightly above average number of

children, they have a lower number of children in school. As a group they have come to the United States the most recently. They are a younger group (mean age = 31.6) and their incomes are the second lowest. Given these data we will describe this group as the Better Educated, Temporary Residents.

## Discussion of Population Segmentation

In this section we have segmented the ESL population, with motivations to attend being the core of that segmentation. As with the ABE studies, we have chosen this approach because motivations are central to understanding a population's behavior toward adult education. With the ESL population, however, we have an obviously heterogeneous group which owes a great deal of its diversity to cross-cultural differences. This raises an interesting and important question: To what extent will a segmentation based on motivations cut across ethnic categories?

Our analysis suggests that although segmentation based on motivation is affected by ethnicity, at the same time the segmentation cuts across ethnic groups. More specifically, three clusters (Family Women, The Strivers, and Integrating Southeast Asians) were marked by concentrations of specific ethnic groups. Family Women has a concentration of Latin Americans, and the other two groups have sizeable concentrations of Southeast Asians. Yet members of these ethnic groups are present in all other groups and Far Easterners, Middle Easterners, and Europeans are quite dispersed across the clusters. Thus, in program planning, it must be recognized that although ethnicity is important, the keys to understanding behavior toward ESL go beyond ethnicity alone.

Several of the demographic variables used for cluster definition seem to vary widely among groups, suggesting that they are particularly potent in delimiting group definition. They are: city-dwelling, plans to return to one's native country and to stay or not, marriage, gender, whether one has children, and years of school in the native country. There was little variation in communication variables, age and income suggesting that these variables are not powerful in distinguishing groups within the ESL population.

## IV. ETHNIC ANALYSIS

In the last chapter we presented a segmentation of the ESL population based on motivations to attend. There we concluded that, although ethnicity was a variable which helped us to define the segmentation groups, the motivation-based clusters cut across different cultural groups. While we hope that the value of the motivational-based segmentation is evident at this point, it is also true that ethnicity cannot be ignored in either promotion or instruction. Ethnic groups are excellent recruitment networks and certain cultural groups prefer some messages over others for culturally-based reasons. Language differences and learning differences which vary according to cultural group are clearly important in designing instructional strategies. Accordingly, we felt it particularly important to follow our segmentation based on motivations with one based on ethnicity. Taken together, they represent two equally valid and important ways to approach segmentation for the ESL population.

To accomplish our ethnic analysis, we divided our respondents into five groups based on reported native country. Those groups are depicted in Table 4.

Table 4
Ethnic Groupings and Countries of Origin

| Group | Country | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Latin America | Mexico | 28 | 14 |
| | Brazil | 4 | 2 |
| | Colombia | 3 | 2 |
| | El Salvador | 3 | 2 |
| | Other | 3 | 2 |
| | Cuba | 2 | 1 |
| | Guatemala | 2 | 1 |
| | Panama | 2 | 1 |
| | Argentina | 1 | 1 |
| | Honduras | 1 | 1 |
| | Nicaragua | 1 | 1 |
| | Peru | 1 | 1 |
| | Puerto Rico | 1 | 1 |
| | Group total | 51 | 26 |

Table 4 (continued)
Ethnic Groupings and Countries of Origin

| Group | Country | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Middle East | Iran | 3 | 2 |
| | Turkey | 2 | 1 |
| | Syria | 1 | 2 |
| | Egypt | 1 | 1 |
| | Lebanon | 1 | 1 |
| | Morocco | 1 | 1 |
| | Tunisia | 1 | 1 |
| | Group total | 10 | 5 |
| Southeast Asia | Vietnam | 49 | 24 |
| | Laos | 35 | 17 |
| | Cambodia | 8 | 4 |
| | Thailand | 2 | 1 |
| | Group total | 94 | 48 |
| Far East | Korea | 12 | 6 |
| | China | 9 | 4 |
| | Taiwan | 9 | 4 |
| | Japan | 5 | 3 |
| | Group total | 35 | 18 |
| Europe | Poland | 2 | 1 |
| | Romania | 2 | 1 |
| | Spain | 2 | 1 |
| | Czechoslovakia | 1 | 1 |
| | Greece | 1 | 1 |
| | Group total | 8 | 4 |

After division into ethnic groupings, each group was compared according to the same sociodemographic demographic variables which were used to define the population segmentation based on motivations.

A note of caution is in order before we discuss our findings. What we have termed "ethnic groups" are groups of ESL students who, in most cases, are engaged in the process of assimilation into American society.

Most retain attitudes and behaviors which reflect the cultures where they grew up. It is these culturally-based differences which are reflected in the forthcoming analysis rather than ethnic stereotypes.

Table 5
Population Segmentation of the ESL Sample by Ethnic Grouping

| Variable | Total Sample | Region of Origin (Ethnic Grouping) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Latin Amer. | Middle East | S.E. Asia | Far East | Europe |
| N | 198* | 51 | 10 | 94 | 35 | 8 |
| % of Sample | 100 | 26 | 5 | 47 | 18 | 4 |
| Motivational Factor Scores (Mean item means) | | | | | | |
| F1: Self-Improvement Through Social Integration | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 2.0 |
| F2: Helping Children | 2.1 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 1.8 |
| F3: Job/Economics | 2.3 | 2.3 | 1.7 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 1.9 |
| F4: Function Better/ Reduce Isolation | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.6 |
| F5: Become Empowered | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| F6: Gain Reading and Writing Skills | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| F7: Contribute to Native Land | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| Personal Variables | | | | | | |
| Mean age | 33.1 | 28.0 | 37.2 | 34.9 | 33.5 | 35.4 |
| % Female | 56 | 51 | 50 | 49 | 86 | 88 |
| Mean year entered USA | '83 | '82 | '86 | '82 | '84 | '85 |
| % Married, living with spouse | 64 | 50 | 60 | 68 | 71 | 88 |
| % Married, not living with spouse | 3 | 6 | 10 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| % Single | 33 | 44 | 30 | 30 | 26 | 13 |

Table 5 (continued)

| Variable | Total Sample | Region of Origin (Ethnic Grouping) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Latin Amer. | Middle East | S.E. Asia | Far East | Europe |
| (Personal variables - continued) | | | | | | |
| % Having children | 60 | 48 | 60 | 69 | 51 | 63 |
| Mean number children | 3.1 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 3.5 | 2.0 | 1.8 |
| Mean number children living at home | 2.3 | 2.5 | 1.5 | 2.7 | 1.6 | 1.0 |
| Mean number children in American schools | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 1.3 | .6 |
| Mean number children who speak English | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 1.7 | 1.2 |
| Mean number people living (with respondent) in home | 3.8 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.3 | 2.5 | 1.9 |
| Mean number of these people who speak English | 3.1 | 3.2 | 2.8 | 3.6 | 2.1 | 1.8 |
| Economic Variables | | | | | | |
| Mean annual household income (in thousands of dollars) | 19.1 | 19.3 | -- | 18.8 | 16.1 | 12.7 |
| % Employed | 53 | 60 | 0 | 61 | 40 | 63 |
| % Receiving public assistance | 30 | 24 | 0 | 49 | 6 | 13 |
| Education-Related Variables | | | | | | |
| Mean years of schooling in native country | 9.8 | 9.8 | 12.0 | 7.9 | 13.1 | 15.1 |
| Mean year of enrollment in this program | '85 | '85 | '86 | '85 | '85 | '86 |
| How well do you read and write in your native language? (1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Very Well) Mean score | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.9 | 2.6 | 2.9 | 3.0 |
| How old were you when you started to learn English? | 23.2 | 20.9 | 29.1 | 26.0 | 18.4 | 28.3 |

Table 5 (continued)

| Variable | Total Sample | Region of Origin (Ethnic Grouping) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Latin Amer. | Middle East | S.E. Asia | Far East | Europe |
| Type of Residence in Native Country | | | | | | |
| % lived on farm | 15 | 16 | 0 | 23 | 6 | 0 |
| % lived in city | 71 | 76 | 100 | 58 | 88 | 100 |
| % lived "other" | 13 | 8 | 0 | 20 | 6 | 0 |
| Plan to Return to Native Country to Visit? | | | | | | |
| % yes | 51 | 71 | 80 | 24 | 71 | 88 |
| % maybe | 33 | 22 | 20 | 50 | 17 | 0 |
| % no | 16 | 8 | 0 | 26 | 11 | 13 |
| Plan to Return to Native Country to Stay? | | | | | | |
| % yes | 19 | 22 | 30 | 5 | 49 | 38 |
| % maybe | 33 | 35 | 30 | 38 | 23 | 0 |
| % no | 48 | 43 | 40 | 57 | 29 | 63 |
| How Often Do You Communicate With Friends or Relatives in Your Native Country? (1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often) | | | | | | |
| Mean score | 2.3 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 2.8 |
| How Often Do You Speak English When You Are . . . ? (Mean scores: 1 = Often, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Never) | | | | | | |
| . . . at home | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.5 |
| . . . out with friends | 1.8 | 1.6 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 |
| . . . at work | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.3 | 1.7 | 1.8 |
| Program Evaluation Items (Mean scores: 1 = Not True, 2 = Somewhat True, 3 = Very True) | | | | | | |
| I like my teachers in these classes | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 |
| I like the other students in these classes | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 3.0 |
| I am learning what I want to learn in these classes | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 2.8 |
| Interviewer Ratings of Language Skills | | | | | | |
| % low | 7 | 14 | 10 | 3 | 6 | 25 |
| % moderate | 54 | 47 | 60 | 65 | 43 | 13 |
| % high | 39 | 39 | 30 | 32 | 51 | 63 |

* Six of the original 204 respondents failed to supply their country of origin; this table is based on a reduced N of 198.

Latin American Students (26% of study sample)

Latin American students in this sample are about average with respect to previous urban-rural residence in their native countries. Seventy-one percent plan to return to their native countries, but only 22% expect to stay. Half the Latin Americans are married, which is the lowest incidence of marriage among ethnic groups in this study, and 44% are single, which is the highest percent of being single. Sixty percent are employed, an above average figure, but the fewest number have children (.48) and there are fewer females among this group than any other. Latin American students are about average in respect to their language proficiency as rated by their interviewers and completed the average amount of years of school in their native countries (9.9). As a group they have been in the United States the longest and learned English at a relatively early age for the population. They are the youngest group, which may account for the lower marriage rate, and they earn the highest incomes.

They are approximately average with respect to motivational factors except perhaps for Empowerment, where they are highest among all groups. They are most motivated by "Empowerment," " Functioning Better," and "Reading and Writing."

As the reader will recall, our earlier analysis identified a group which we defined as "Family Women." This group was mostly married, highly female and included a disproportionately high concentration of Latin Americans. Yet the ethnic analysis shows that the Latin American group is the least married, is the most male, and has the fewest children. Although this may seem to be a contradiction, it is not. Although "Family Women" is dominated by Latin American students, almost 80% of the Latin American

students belong to other motivational-based clusters. This underscores the important fact that ethnic groupings themselves are not homogeneous, and different subgroupings may behave in different ways toward ESL instruction.

Middle Eastern Students (5% of study sample)

Since there are but ten Middle Eastern students in this study, comparisons and generalizations have to be made with caution. All are of urban origin. Eighty percent plan to return to their native countries and nearly a third plan to stay. About the average number are married, but none are employed. Half are female, and none are on public assistance. This group has attained the second highest schooling in their native countries (12.0 years) and has the second highest number of children living with them. They are the most recent immigrants to the United States and learned English at the latest age (29.1 years). They use English in communication more frequently than any other group and are by far the oldest.

Middle Eastern students are most motivated by "Improvement/ Integration," "Functioning Better," "Empowerment," and "Reading/Writing," although their scores on these dimensions are about average for the population. They are below the average on "Helping Children" and "Job/ Economics."

No income statistics are reported for Middle Eastern students because one individual had a very large income which skewed the results for this very small group.

Southeast Asian Students (47% of population)

Southeast Asian students are the largest group comprising almost half the sample in this study. Although the majority (.58) originally came from the city, there is the largest population of farmers among this group (.23). The smallest percent of all groups plan to return to their native countries, and virtually none plan to stay if they do return. They are about average in respect to the incidence of marriage and have slightly better than average employment. More of them have children than any other group, and they have more men enrolled in ESL than any other group. Almost half are on public assistance, the highest percent of all groups, and as a group they have been enrolled in the program the longest.

They achieved by far the least amount of schooling in their native countries (7.9 years), and they are tied for the lowest ability to read and write well in their native languages. They have the largest families and the largest number of people living in their homes. As a group they have been in this country the longest. Family incomes are only slightly below average.

Southeast Asian students are at or above average on all motivational factors which leads to the conclusion that they are highly motivated "in general" in respect to ESL.

This group is heavily comprised of Vietnamese and Laotians who, because of the political situation in their native countries, "can't go home again" and is perhaps the group whose cultural differences make integration most difficult. Yet, the facts that employment is above average, incomes are above average, motivation is generally high, and that there are more of them attending than any other group, suggest the Southeast Asian students are learning how to negotiate American society rather effectively.

Far Eastern Students (18% of study sample)

Far Eastern students comprise 18% of the study population and are mostly from urban backgrounds (.88). Nearly three quarters plan to return to their native countries and about half, the largest proportion of all groups, intend to stay. An above average number are married (.71) and less than average are employed (.40). Eighty-six percent are women and half have children. The incidence of public assistance is very low (.06). Interviewers rate their English-language proficiency to be the highest, save that of the European students. Next to the Europeans, the Far Eastern students have the most education in their native countries (13.1 years) and are above average in respect to how frequently they communicate with others still in their native countries and how well they read in their native languages. They have relatively fewer children (2.0). Although of average age, they started to learn English the earliest (18.4). As a group, however, their incomes are the lowest.

Far Eastern students are most motivated by "Functioning Better," "Empowerment," and "Reading/Writing." Their scores are below average for "Self-Improvement/Integration" and "Job/Economics."

European Students (4% of study sample)

European students are a distinct minority in this study, comprising but four percent of the study sample. Thus, given the small numbers, comparisons must be made with extreme care.

All European students in this study were urban dwellers in their native countries (1.00). Almost ninety percent plan to return to their native countries and 38% plan to stay. The great majority are married (.88), and they are rated highest of all groups by their interviewers in English-language proficiency.

They are the most highly educated of all groups in their native countries (15.1 years). They communicate frequently with others in their native countries and they read proficiently in their native languages.

Their motivations are below average for "Self-Improvement-Integration," "Helping Children and Job/Economics" and are about average for the remaining motivations.

## Discussion of Ethnic Analysis

Clearly, there are significant differences between ethnic groups of ESL students in respect to sociodemographics and motivations. It is quite likely that these differences stem from at least two directions. First, nearly all the ESL students in our sample were born into different cultures where they experienced different acculturation, language itself being an example. Similarly, significantly different histories brought them to the United States. Some, for example, were refugees; others came to find employment. These differences are obviously reflected in the segmentation.

There is, however, another potential source of difference which is more subtle. It may well be that the program attracts certain types of students from within ethnic groups. For example, the Southeast Asians in our sample exhibit high scores on all motivations. This may be because, in general, Southeastern Asians possess this trait, or alternatively, it may simply be that ESL programs tend to attract Southeast Asians who are the most motivated.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

### Motivations

As we indicated earlier, it is important to understand ESL students' motivations for attending programs because both recruitment and instruction can be enhanced if these functions are directed towards motivation. There are two things which strike us about the motivations of ESL students. The first is that there is considerable similarity between the motivations of ABE students, as indicated in the ABE studies, and the motivations of ESL students studied here. Although this similarity may partially be an artifact of methodology (we included many similar motivation items in both studies), the factors themselves are similar, leading us to conclude that the similarities are real. Both ABE and ESL students are motivated by self-improvement, a desire to help children, employment and economic concerns, and a desire to read and write. To a significant extent, therefore, it is reasonable to employ general strategies which are similar for the recruitment and tailored instruction of both groups.

Yet at the same time there are differences between the motivations of ESL and ABE students which need to be considered. Clearly, the fact that most ESL students are in the process of integrating into United States society colors motivation. This is evident in "Self-Improvement Through Social Integration," where integration appears to be linked to self-improvement, and it is also evident in "Functioning Better/Reduce Isolation," where reducing the isolation produced from not speaking English well is related to what are generally termed "coping skills."

Another difference between the ABE and ESL groups in our studies is that the motivations for the ABE group are more clearly delineated through

factor analysis than those of the ESL group. Part of the reason for this may be that the meanings ESL students ascribed to the survey items may have varied to some extent according to cultural background. Yet it may also be that the underlying structure of motivation is simply "tighter" for ABE students than it is for ESL students.

In summary, the differences between the motivations of ABE students and ESL students suggest that, although in general the same broad strategies for recruitment and tailoring instruction may be applicable to both groups, differences must be recognized in the specific implementation of strategies in order to maximize efficacy.

## Segmentation

Segmenting the population into groups based on the way subgroups can be expected to behave toward ESL is a critical step in the differentiated approach to recruitment and instruction. Obviously, there are many ways in which any group can be divided, some meaningful, others trivial. In this study, we have segmented the population in two important ways, each providing its own insights.

First, following the approach used in the ABE studies, we segmented the population with motivations for attendance being at the core. By emphasizing motivations, this segmentation focuses on the essential benefits ESL students seek from participation. It follows that if ESL programs tailor recruitment and instruction to satisfy these essential benefits, which vary by segments, a more attractive and relevant program will result. The motivational segmentation identified six groups: Family Women, The Strivers, Integrating Southeast Asians, the Least Family Oriented, and Better-Educated Temporary Residents. One segment was too small to name.

Although segmentation according to motivations has a utility which should be evident by now, another highly salient characteristic of ESL students is their differing ethnic backgrounds. Culture is an extremely powerful influence on group behavior. Therefore, a second segmentation, based on cultural differences, seemed quite warranted. Accordingly, we divided the study sample into five ethnic groupings prevalent in the population: Latin Americans, Middle Easterners, Southeastern Asians, Far Easterners, and Europeans. As expected, we identified significant differences between groups in respect to motivations and sociodemographic variables.

## Implications for Practice

In this study, we have sought to discover patterns of motivations and sociodemographic variables among an important and incredibly diverse service population in adult education. The overarching goal of the research was to gain a better understanding of ESL students so that they might be served more effectively. But after all is said and done - after the many hours of data collection and data analysis - one is left with the ever-present and always valid question which has caused more than one educational researcher to lose sleep: "So what?" Now that the work is done, what specifically might ESL educators do that they didn't do before?

The easy answer is: "Study this report." In its pages, especially in its cumbersome but information-packed tables, practitioners will find compelling portraits, not of a single "average" ESL student, nor of the memorable individuals that teachers always remember, but of distinct types of students. A thorough understanding of these basic types will allow practitioners to examine their own practice to decide the extent to which they are or are not meeting the diverse needs of the diverse population.

The motivational factors presented in Table 1 have fairly obvious implications for both instruction and recruitment. The seven factors discovered in this study represent the seven basic reasons why adults make the effort to attend ESL classes. Teachers can look over the list and ask themselves, "Are the things I am doing in the classroom likely to help my students fulfill these motivations? Am I neglecting any of the seven motivations? What more can I do to help my students achieve what they want to achieve?" Curriculum and program planners can ask themselves similar questions, examining instructional materials and program structures to ensure that a narrowness of scope does not restrict students' rights to accomplish their personal educational goals.

For those involved in the recruitment of learners for ESL programs, the findings presented in this report should prove a rich resource. The motivational factors, separately and in combination, can serve as the bases for well-focused promotional messages, based not on guesswork but on solid empirical data. The population segmentation based on motivations (see Table 3 and the subsequent narrative) identified six distinct types of students, each of which provides an opportunity for targeted recruitment efforts - recruitment efforts in which promotional messages are written, not to an amorphous general public, but to a well-described, recognizable audience.

Finally, the segmentation based on ethnic groups (see Table 5 and the subsequent narrative) will allow educators who work in areas with identifiable, but perhaps underserved, ethnic populations to better understand certain commonalities in the lives and educational motivations of such groups - at least to the extent that the students who participated in this study are "typical" of such groups.

APPENDICES

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DIRECTIONS FOR INFORMATION SPECIALISTS

Iowa ESL Study

Our data collection objective for this study is to collect valid data on 240 ESL students. In this, your efforts are critically important, for the quality of our data depends primarily on you. As you know, for the ESL population, an adequate understanding of English is a major issue, for if students do not understand the questions, obviously they will not be able to give valid responses. We know we will not have a random sample by this means, but it will serve our purposes. We need your help in purposefully choosing a representative sample of students to collect data from, representative across ability and ethnic lines, not only the brightest and the best. Here is how we would like you to proceed.

1. If possible, one week prior to your visit, contact the coordinator/director of the site and inform him/her of your visit. Ask if classes are organized by English proficiency level and explain that you are only interested in interviewing students whose English is of sufficient proficiency to respond. Hence, you will not be collecting data from students in low level classes.

2. Prior to data collection, teachers will be asked to read this guide and identify to the Information Specialist those students in the class who are sufficiently proficient in English to respond. Explain the study as needed.

3. On the day of the visit, in consultation with teachers, select classes which have potential respondents--those with adequate English. Ask the teachers to identify respondents. You will then interview all members of each selected class who qualify as respondents. If all eligibles cannot be interviewed in one class time, you will have to return until you have reached your goal. Interview those who are attending. Do not concern yourself with absentees.

4. When you interview your respondent:

    a. Enunciate clearly and speak slowly. Repeat a question if the respondent does not seem to understand. It is not advisable to seek translation assistance as a third party may bias responses.

b. After your first question, check to see if the respondent understands. If not, try a few more questions and again check for understanding. If you have good reason to believe that we are not getting accurate information, terminate the interview.

c. Use your judgement in respect to interpreting vocabulary. If a simple clarification can be made, that is acceptable. But if an important word cannot be clarified without distorting the question, do not attempt to force a response.

d. Conduct your interview in a place where there is a minimum of background noise and distraction. Remember, speaking in English requires much more concentration for non-English speakers, so eliminate everything that might interfere with concentration. Let the respondent set the pace of the interview.

e. At the end of the interview there is a place for you to report your assessment of the accuracy of the data and the level of proficiency in English. It is important that you complete this section. Your professional judgement here is highly valued.

IOWA ESL STUDY

| Interviewer | Site | ID# |
|---|---|---|

| Completed | Respondent |
|---|---|

Introduction

My name is . I am working with Western Iowa Tech in Sioux City on a study which will help us improve classes like this one. Three other schools in Iowa are taking part in this study. I would like you to help us by answering some questions. Also, we may be able to use the results from these interviews to show the need for money for ESL classes. We will not use your name but only your answers.

I. General Questions

1. First, could you tell us how you found out about this class? (Note: If the respondent was referred by someone, find out how s/he is related to the respondent, e.g., friend, employer, etc.)

2. When did you first start attending this class?

   month_____ year_____

3. Why did you start to attend at that particular time? Was something going on in your life that made you decide to enroll?

4. Did anyone tell you you must attend this class? (If yes, who and why?)

II. Now I am going to read you some statements that might or might not be true for you about why you want to learn to speak English. After I read each statement, you tell if <u>for you</u> it is "not true," "somewhat true," or "very true." Again, you have three choices, "not true," "somewhat true," or "very true." **There are no right answers.** Your answers are important to us. Ready? How true are the following statements for you?

Note: a) If the respondent says that a statement is not applicable, mark it "not true."
b) Please leave <u>no</u> blanks. All blanks will be considered "not true."
c) Clarify if necessary, but only if asked.

| Statements | Not True | Somewhat True | Very True |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I want to learn English to get a job. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. I want to learn English to learn about the United States. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. I want to learn English to fit in better in my neighborhood. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. I want to learn English to please my sponsors. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. I want to learn English to read directions. | | | |
| 6. I want to learn English to feel more sure of myself. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. I want to learn English to speak English to my children. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. I want to learn English to enter job training. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9. I want to learn English to get a better job. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10. I want to learn English to show myself that I can. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. I want to learn English to feel more important. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. I want to learn English to shop better. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 13. I want to learn English to go on for more education. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 14. I want to learn English to meet new people. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 15. I want to learn English to be a better person. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 16. I want to read better in English. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 17. I want to learn English to be able to help other people. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 18. I want to learn English so people won't make fun of me. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 19. I want to learn English to make better use of my free time. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 20. I want to learn English to become a United States citizen. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

| Statements | Not True | Somewhat True | Very True |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21. I want to learn English for when I return to my native country. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 22. I want to learn English so I can make decisions about my own life. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 23. I want to learn English to be smarter. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 24. I want to learn English to talk to my children's teachers. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 25. I want to learn English to use the telephone better. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 26. I want to learn English to support myself. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 27. I want to learn English so I won't feel lonely. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 28. I want to learn English to please my employer. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 29. I want to learn English because I enjoy learning new things. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 30. I want to learn English to be more independent. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 31. I want to learn English to be a better example for my children. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 32. I want to learn English to get a United States high school diploma. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 33. I want to learn English to earn more money. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 34. I want to learn English to help keep my family together. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 35. I want to learn English to understand how to live in the United States. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 36. I want to write better in English. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 37. I want to learn English so that people won't cheat me. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 38. I want to learn English to please my husband/wife. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 39. I want to learn English to help people in my native land. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 40. I want to learn English to help my children with their school work. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Now I am going to ask you some questions** about these classes. Please tell me how true these statements are for you, just as you have been doing.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 41. I like my teachers in these classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 42. I like the other students in these classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 43. I am learning what I want to learn in these classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

III. Now I am going to ask you some questions about yourself. Are you ready?

1. What is your native country? _____

2. In your native country, did you live:
   on a farm _____
   in the city _____
   other (list) _____

3. How many years did you attend school in your native country? (Circle one)

   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

4. What was your occupation in your native country? _____
   (occupation)

5. How often do you communicate (see, speak with, write to) with friends or relatives in your native country?

   never _____ sometimes _____ often _____

6. What is your native language? _____

7. How well do you read and write in your native language?

   poor _____ fair _____ very well _____

8. Do you plan to return to your native country to visit?

   yes _____ no _____ maybe _____

9. Do you plan to return to your country to stay?

   yes _____ no _____ not sure _____

10. Are you: married (living with spouse) _____ married (not living with spouse) _____ single _____

11. Are you currently employed? yes _____ no _____

12. (If yes) What is your occupation? _____

13. Do you have children? yes _____ no _____

    (If yes) How many children do you have? _____
    How many children live with you now? _____
    How many children are in school here? _____
    How many children speak English? _____

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14. How many people live with you in your home?_____

15. How many of these people speak English?_____

16. What year did you come to the U.S. to live? _____
(year)

17. How old were you when you started to learn English? _____
(age)

18. What languages do you speak? _____
_____
_____
_____

19. How often do you speak English when:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| You are at home? | often_____ | sometimes_____ | never_____ |
| You are out with friends? | often_____ | sometimes_____ | never_____ |
| When you are at work? | often_____ | sometimes_____ | never_____ |

20. What is your:
a. Age?_____ b. Sex?_____

21. What is your total annual household income? (The amount everybody living in your household together earns.) _____

Note: This may need some explanation and help with estimate. (This is before taxes.)

22. Are you currently receiving any type of public assistance? (Public assistance includes food stamps, free school meals, WIC, etc.)

yes_____ no_____

23. Rate your respondent on his/her language skills.

Note to Interviewer: Rate your respondent on his/her language skills.

_____low _____moderate _____high

Since the respondents lack proficiency in English, we are concerned with the accuracy of responses. In your opinion, are the responses in this interview reasonably accurate?

yes_____ no_____

If no, please comment: